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Teachers and Curriculum provides an avenue for the publication of papers that:

- raise important issues to do with the curriculum
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- provide examples of informed curriculum practice
- review books that have a curriculum focus.

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CLIVE MCGEE
EDITOR 2011

This edition of *Teachers and Curriculum* is being published at a time of continuing change in curriculum in New Zealand and follows on the heels of the celebration of World Teacher's Day on 28 October 2011. Curriculum change in primary and secondary schools has accelerated in the years since the introduction of the revised New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) in 2007 and ongoing modifications to the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA). Since the revised NZC many schools have responded to the "spirit" of the document. School leaders have correctly interpreted that NZC provides a national guideline about the general aspirations, values and goals of a broad educational experience for all students; and a guideline as to the content combinations that form the curriculum learning areas. They have picked up on the intention made clear in NZC that this guideline is the basis for the design and formulation of school-level curriculum. From the suggested achievement objectives and content arranged in eight levels, school-level decisions determine how the national guideline is used to provide a cohesive and sequential Year One to Thirteen curriculum.

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa for Maori medium schools and classrooms was finalised in 2008 as the second strand of the national curriculum revision. Ka Hikitia is a blueprint for future Maori educational achievement and there is a recent new policy outline for Pasifika education in schools. National Standards policy has recently impacted upon schools with Year One to Eight students and caused controversy over whether the need to attend to standards has taken some attention away from the ongoing attempts of teachers to understand the revised national curriculum and develop worthwhile classroom programmes. It is well known that adapting to revised curriculum can take considerable time. There is also concern that implementing the standards policy in reading, writing and mathematics may have taken away some of the curriculum autonomy gained under the revised NZC.

All of these changes can be followed in publications like the New Zealand Education Gazette and the Ministry of Education website Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI), both of which publish numerous examples of experimentation and innovation at the school level that provide evidence that school leaders and teachers have grasped the opportunities to innovate and experiment with curriculum topics and teaching and learning. Subject associations and teacher unions have also played a part in sharing ideas about new possibilities in curriculum design and development and classroom implementation. And there are numerous other publishers of resources to support teachers and students.

Against the backdrop of curriculum change this issue has papers that are of relevance to a wide-ranging audience of readers. A number of the papers focus on aspects of the curriculum in schools.

One of the issues in any national curriculum is the way subjects either occupy their own place or are clustered into a learning area. Either way it is generally accepted that to be included in a curriculum a case has to be made to justify its inclusion. Philippa Hunter has explored history as a subject in the curriculum. She looks at competing conceptions of the subject and the teaching of it and analyses the potential of key competencies in the national curriculum for mapping out a way forward for history as a subject. Margaret Walshaw and Roger Openshaw have addressed the recent reading, writing and mathematics standards policy. They point out debates over standards in schools are not new and they track the debates that preceded the latest policy. Their paper indicates how curriculum change – in this case standards – is politically and ideologically charged. Lorna Gillespie and Sue McBain also explore ideological curriculum influences in looking at the teaching

of senior secondary school physical education; in particular the recent gravitation towards a socio-cultural and critical orientation to teaching. They look at theory-practice links and suggest a pedagogical framework they call a Critical Analysis Process. Jenny Young-Loveridge examines the teaching and learning of counting in mathematics and suggests alternative approaches that might improve student achievement. She also makes links to the national standards in mathematics. John Williams and Dawn Penney report the findings from a three-year study in an Australian setting. The study was on the potential to use different forms of digital technology in the assessment of senior secondary school courses in engineering and physical education. They discuss associated issues including authenticity in the assessment of student learning in courses with substantial performance components in the learning.

Another group of papers is made up of topics that bridge across school curriculum and teacher education; neophyte teachers who are introduced to the field of school curriculum and in-service teachers adapting to curriculum change. In the context of science curriculum Anne Hume reports on her speculative attempts to develop a model of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) learning in novice science teachers. Ways of adapting and applying the model by early career science teachers are suggested and discussed. A paper by Frances Edwards has its focus on initial teacher education and links with national school curriculum. It is a study of the extent to which primary school student teachers understood the principles in the national curriculum and how their understandings were linked to their own beliefs and practices. A paper that links initial and in-service teacher education is by Mary Hill, Lexie Grudnoff and Fiona Ell. They report on four case studies of novice teachers to trace their learning journeys as they moved through their teacher education and into teaching. The learning journey was the teaching of mathematics and the authors discuss the factors that impacted on the participants along the way and identify implications for teacher educators. Kerry Earl, Jenny Ferrier-Kerr and Bill Ussher explore compulsory papers in professional studies in initial teacher education and how what they term enduring understandings can be identified in the content of the papers. They critique the merits of an approach to tertiary teaching that is designed to improve student teacher learning.

A paper on teacher professional learning in mathematics curriculum looks at recent Maori medium national standards in mathematics. Ngarewa Hawera and Marilyn Taylor studied teachers in Maori medium schools to identify key factors that were related to the teachers' professional growth as they came to grips with understanding the standards and being able to make modifications to their teaching approaches.

The final item is a research note by Anne-Marie Hunt that reports on a review of an initial teacher education programme that was offered in a regional city in response to local needs, and that was linked to a major provider.

This collection of papers represents explorations by authors of a range of issues that are related to recent changes in national curriculum policies and practices. Together, they are valuable in continuing the debates and discussions about recent changes. Rather than stop short of relating the debates to the realities of schools and teacher education, there are many examples – in the papers – of attempts to understand curriculum changes and develop ways of responding to changes by experimentation in school curriculum and teacher education curriculum. Therefore, the papers contribute to the advancement of curriculum ideas and teaching and learning approaches across the school and tertiary teacher education sectors.